

April 14, 2021

Laura Bishop, Commissioner
Minnesota Pollution Control Agency
520 Lafayette Road N.
St. Paul, MN 55155

RE: Certificate of Need Applications – Landfill Expansion

Dear Ms. Bishop,

We understand that the MPCA is currently reviewing four Certificate of Need applications for expansion of landfills. We also understand the regional need for additional landfill capacity. There are many factors that make sites well or poorly suited for landfills. Based on these factors, we have significant concerns regarding the Burnsville Sanitary Landfill expansion application. We request that the MPCA carefully consider the following issues while preparing your preliminary determination on the applications. We understand there will be opportunity for public comment between the preliminary determination and the MPCA's final decision.

1. **Environmental Sensitivity.** Landfills are permanent facilities. The liners that protect groundwater from contaminants within landfills have much shorter lifespans. Inevitably, they age and wear out and contaminants escape. The State of Minnesota will be asked to spend over \$100 million to limit groundwater contamination at the nearby Freeway Landfill and Freeway Dump sites also in Burnsville. As you prepare your preliminary determination, please consider the environmental wisdom in placing large volumes of additional waste:
 - a. adjacent to a major river;
 - b. adjacent to a National Wildlife Refuge;
 - c. near the water supplies of large cities and within the City of Burnsville Drinking Water Protection Environmental Overlay Zone;
 - d. in a floodplain;
 - e. in an area that requires wetland removal; and
 - f. in a high profile location near hundreds of homes.

2. **Visual Impacts.** The expansion is proposed to increase the height of the landfill to an elevation of 1,082 feet above mean sea level, which is 389 feet above the nearby Minnesota River. The top of the mound will be higher than Mount Gilboa, Bloomington's highest elevation in the Hyland Ski Area. The top of the landfill mound will be more than 340 feet higher than the nearest residence in Burnsville, which is approximately 1,000 linear feet from the base of the mound and 250 feet higher than the nearest residence in Bloomington, which is approximately 3,400 linear feet from the base of the mound. We are concerned that the landfill mound will become the dominant and defining visual feature of this portion of the Minnesota River Valley. We request that the MPCA take visual impacts into consideration as you prepare your preliminary determination.

- 3. **Aviation Impacts.** Landfills are notorious for attracting large birds. When visiting the Burnsville Sanitary Landfill, we've observed numerous eagles, seagulls and other birds. The birds attracted by landfills and corresponding concerns regarding mid-air collisions with birds are the primary reason the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) has serious concerns about placing landfills near airports. The Burnsville Sanitary Landfill expansion is proposed near MSP and FCM Airports and directly underneath a very frequently used flyway departing MSP, one of the nation's busiest airports. The tall height of the landfill will bring birds closer to aircraft and present special aviation concerns. We request that the MPCA consider impacts on aviation as you prepare your preliminary determination.

Thank you in advance for considering our concerns as you prepare the preliminary determination on the Certificate of Need applications. We look forward to your review and participating in the public input process later this year.

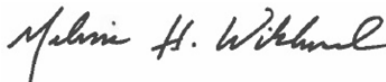
Sincerely,



Tim Busse
Mayor of Bloomington



Senator Melisa Franzen
District 49



Senator Melissa H. Wiklund
District 50



Representative Steve Elkins
District 49B



Representative Michael Howard
District 50A



Representative Andrew Carlson
District 50B

Copy via e-mail: Bloomington City Council Members
Debbie Goettel, Hennepin County Commissioner
Sarena Selbo, Manager, Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge